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PRESS ADVISORY

No. 063-P
March 24, 1994

Secretary of Defense William J. Perry will hold a press briefing, Friday, March 25 at 10:30 a.m. in the DoD briefing room, 2E791. The subject of the briefing will be Secretary Perry's recent trip to Moscow, Russia; Almaty, Kazakhstan; Kiev, Ukraine; and Minsk, Belarus. He will brief the results of his meetings on defense conversion and the Nunn-Lugar implementing agreements.

The event is open to the media. For further information, contact LtCol Stephanie Hoehne, 703-697-5131.

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SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY
 SPECIAL BRIEFING ON TRIP TO FORMER SOVIET REPUBLICS
 PENTAGON
 MARCH 25, 1994

KATHLEEN DELASKI (Defense Department Spokesperson): Good morning. Thank you for coming.

Dr. Perry has agreed to come down to the briefing this morning to give you some details about our remarkable trip to the former Soviet Union. He would like to start off with that, and then he can take some of your questions.

So with that I turn you over to Dr. Perry.

SEC. PERRY: Thank you, Kathleen.

A few -- two announcements first unrelated to the trip. First of all, I have a message for the families of those who died at Pope Air Force Base and those who were injured.

To these families: You are in our thoughts and in our prayers. This was a terrible accident and a harsh reminder that military service, even in peacetime, even in the United States, is dangerous. It requires sacrifice and bravery not only from the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, but from their families as well. You have put your lives and hearts at risk in the service of your nation and deserve thanks from all Americans.

I plan to attend a memorial service at Ft. Bragg on Tuesday to deliver this message in person. And this morning, President Clinton, National Security Adviser Lake, and the chief of staff of the Army, General Sullivan, will be going to Ft. Bragg to meet with the families and with some of the injured to offer their sympathy and their support.

The second announcement is that the withdrawal of our forces from Somalia was completed today. The last C-5 aircraft left Mogadishu at 9:13 a.m. local time en route to the U.S. And General Montgomery, the commander of the U.S. forces in Somalia, then departed by helicopter, and he will be flying back on a C-141 from Kenya, arriving at Andrews Air Force Base on 4 p.m. on Monday.

I wanted to talk about the trip that I just returned -- from which I just returned. This was

pragmatic partnership in action. As some of you know, I gave a talk at George Washington University two weeks ago outlining the fundamentals of our relationship, emerging relationship, with Russia and the other states of the former Soviet Union. And I called this a pragmatic partnership because I saw it as comprising of policies and programs which both benefitted the United States and benefitted those nations.

Two days after I gave this talk, I left for Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus. In Kazakhstan, for example, we had an opportunity to deepen the military-to-military relationship, one element of the pragmatic relationship. The specific example in Kazakhstan was that we agreed to help the Kazakhstanis set up what is essentially a navy in the Caspian Sea, what we would call a Coast Guard, to help them patrol and protect their border areas.

A second example of the partnership was demonstrated in Ukraine. That had to do with the program for dismantling nuclear weapons. We went to Pervomaisk, which is the site of a major ICBM operational facility in Ukraine. They have SS-19 and SS-24 missiles based there, all of them targeted at the United States at one time. And this is the site where the dismantling is underway, pursuant to the agreement, the summit agreement which was made in Moscow in January. This is the trilateral agreement between the United States, Russia and Ukraine.

When we got to that site, they took me down to the control center, which is about -- almost a hundred meters, a hundred yards underground, and there they had two Ukrainian soldiers go through the checkout of the missiles that they do prior to a launch. And these two soldiers were capable of checking out and then launching up to 100 different ICBMs, including about 800 nuclear warheads. And I have to tell you, it was a stunning experience to stand there and watch the control for enough warheads to destroy every major city in the United States.

We went from that control center then to the silos and, in particular, they opened the lid on one of the silos and we looked down at the missile which was still there, but with the warhead missing, because this was one of the warheads, one of the set of warheads that had been shipped to Russia for dismantlement the previous week. Indeed, by the day we were there, there have been 120 warheads already have been shipped from Pervomaisk to Russia for the purposes of final dismantlement.

The third example of the partnership we saw in

Belarus. We saw a clear example of defense conversion working in that there were three partnerships that were launched while we were there that involved American business enterprises forming a partnership with a Ukrainian -- in each case with a Ukrainian defense company for the purpose of manufacturing commercial products. Here's an example of the pragmatic partnership that benefited both American companies and Belarus companies.

And finally, in Russia, we saw an example of the partnership working in different ways altogether. We met with General Grachev, the minister of defense of Russia, and discussed the Partnership for Peace with him, and at the conclusion of that meeting, he announced to the press that Russia would join the Partnership for Peace and indeed would have their proposal for joining into NATO by the end of the month. I also had some interesting discussions with him relative to the continuation of the joint work between Americans and Russians relative to moving towards a peace agreement in Bosnia.

So these are four particular examples of each of the four different ways in which the partnership works -- all of which were described in the talk that I gave at George Washington and all of which are important components then of what I've been calling a pragmatic partnership.

Now, backing away from the specific country-by-country, program-by-program aspect of the trip, I want to point out that this trip also demonstrated that our policies are not Russia-dominated, and they're not Yeltsin-centered. We met not only with Russia. We spent equivalent time in Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus. We met not only with government officials, but we met with the senior military officers in Russia and we met with the Duma, the -- one of the bodies of the parliament in Russia. We had a very interesting meeting with the defense committee and the foreign relations committee of the Duma. And I might also say we had comparable meetings in Ukraine and Kazakhstan and Belarus with parliamentary officials as well as government officials.

These defense relationships, I believe, are key to the future of maintaining a strong partnership with these countries. One of the specific conclusions we came to in a meeting in Ukraine was to establish a particular phone line between our Department of Defense and the Ministry of Defense in Ukraine so that I will be maintaining regular contacts, regular phone calls discussing matters of importance to both of us between myself and General Radetsky, who is the minister of defense in Ukraine.

And then I would also specifically like to observe the importance to all of these programs of the Nunn-Lugar program. This has provided the funding with which we've been able to execute the

programs I've described to you. And this program was a result of the clear vision of Senator Nunn and Senator Lugar more than two years ago in writing this program into legislation, and it was the tool which we had to work with and which we have been very effectively working with in the last year.

Finally, I would like to end on a personal note. We made a side trip to Baikonur, which is the missile test range and the space launch facility, formerly for the Soviet Union. Now, of course, it's in Kazakhstan, although most of the missiles and space vehicles launched there are Russian missiles and space vehicles. This was a very -- I had a -- this was a moving experience, personal experience for me because I spent many years of my career studying the Russian missile program and the Russian space program, always from some very great distance. And now to see close-hand, standing right at the launch facility, talking with the engineers who ran the program, to see the very launch facilities and the missiles and the space vehicles that comprise that program was really an interesting experience.

Now, with that -- those introductory comments, I'd like to open it up for questions, either on the Russian trip or on any other subject you care to address.

Yes?

Q: Mr. Secretary, good morning. A two-part question. First of all, what tonic do you take, because you seem to be indefatigable with all your travels and returning and heading up to the U.N., and you don't look tired and worse for wear.

But specifically, if I may change briefly to North and South Korea, you were quoted as saying that perhaps the U.S. would bolster U.S. forces in South Korea. Can you give us your thoughts on that, perhaps even specific numbers if you have them?

SEC. PERRY: Let me be a little more -- let me answer the question a little more expansively instead of getting -- and then I'll get to that particular question.

I want to start off by observing that, in my judgment, there is no military crisis at this point between the United States and South Korea on the one hand and North Korea on the other hand. There is no sense of imminent military danger.

The political situation is very -- of very much concern. It's a very serious problem, but we are pursuing that not with military options but with diplomatic options. The United States is considering as we speak the response to the reports from the International Atomic Energy Agency, and we expect that that consideration will be under way for the next month or two. In the meantime, we have taken some positive steps, and I'll describe those to you.

We had agreed earlier to suspend Team Spirit, which is the annual exercise we have taken there.

and we had agreed to begin a third round of the North Korean-U.S. talks. That was on the consideration that the IAEA inspections would be satisfactorily completed and that the North-South talks would be resumed. Neither of those conditions has occurred, and therefore, we are now beginning to replan the Team Spirit, and we have suspended the third round of the U.S.-North Korean talks.

The military situation is a matter -- has been for a number of years a matter of concern. The North Koreans have a million-man army, it's located -- two-thirds of it is located within an hour of the DMZ, and this is a far larger force than is needed for any reasonable defense of that country. In addition to that, in the last few years they have had an effort underway to develop a nuclear weapon program. And then finally, the government in North Korea I would describe as erratic, unstable, and in particular, their decision-making process is closed and it is very difficult for any outsider to decipher. Therefore, our military posture has to reflect our view of the situation.

We will make and are making prudent and appropriate defensive precautions, but we will do them in a careful way. That is, we will not be intimidated either by actions or by statements from the North Korean government, but we are not being provocative. The Patriot decision is one example of that. Patriot was scheduled under original plans to be deployed later this year. It was part of a long-term general modernization program. And as a prudent precaution, we decided to move forward the deployment date of this Patriot, and that is underway now and the Patriots will be in South Korea and deployed in about a month.

Now, our rationale for moving the timing up was not because we thought there was an imminent danger but because we were concerned that with the way the political developments were going, that there might be a confrontation point or a crisis point later in the year, and if and when that happened, we did not then at that point want to be moving the Patriots over because in an emergency if we had to move those over by air, they would consume 80 or 90 C-5s. It's very -- they really take up an enormous amount of airlift at a time when we would want to be using it for other purposes. Therefore, we will move them over by sea and they are in the process of being prepared for sea shipment at this time. If we thought there was an emergency today, we would not have moved them by sea, we would have moved them by air.

I will be monitoring this situation very carefully, both with General Shalikashvili and General Luck. We are consulting extensively with the South Koreans about any defensive measures needed. We have a variety of defensive options being -- that have been planned for some time, and we are considering which of those to invoke and when. We will -- if and when the United Nations decides to authorize sanctions, at that time we will certainly want to increase the defensive measures in Korea, not because we believe that the sanctions are provocative, but because North Korea has stated that any level of sanctions would be provocative. That might just be rhetoric, but it is prudent on our part to take it seriously.

I might also say that I have had a trip to Korea which has been scheduled for several months which will be coming up early next month. It's still tentative, but I still plan to go on that trip, and I will quite clearly take the opportunity to review, both with General Luck and with the South Korean minister of defense which of these defensive plans should be invoked and on what schedule. I cannot give you the details of these plans. We just cannot discuss our military contingency plans in public.

There and then --

Q: Two related questions. How about the possibility -- (inaudible) -- North Korea is playing for time to put together one or two devices?

SEC. PERRY: I'm sorry, could you repeat that?

Q: How about the possibility that North Korea is playing for time to put together one or two devices to pull out of NPT after that and to deliver that kind of technology to interested parties elsewhere?

My second question is isn't it time to focus more on -- (inaudible) -- possible recipients like Teheran, which would be perhaps more likely to use it than the North Koreans?

SEC. PERRY: There are three different kinds of possible dangers from the nuclear program, as suggested by your question. The first of those is whatever near-term danger may exist from the one or perhaps two nuclear devices they might already have. You're all aware, I'm sure, that Mr. Woolsey, as director of Central Intelligence, has briefed on there's a possibility they might already have a nuclear device. We don't know that for sure, and if it does exist, we don't know where it is located or what delivery means that they might have in mind for it. But that is a possible danger which aggravates the present situation. Although I must say our view of the present situation is dominated mostly by the very real and very tangible one million-man army that they have deployed close to the DMZ.

The second danger is that, as a part of the ongoing development program, they might develop a substantial number of nuclear weapons, perhaps a dozen or more, and that -- and with ballistic missile delivery means with them. That danger is a good many years in the future, but it is one which, if we went to stop it, this is the time to be acting. And that's why we are acting at this time to try to curtail that development program.

And the third danger is, if they achieve this nuclear development program, weapon development program which I just postulated, then there is a danger of proliferation, that they would sell either their weapons or their technology to another country like Iran.

Both that second and third danger are serious enough that our policy is trying to head that off before it happens, to try to get this major nuclear weapon program stopped before it gets off the ground. The danger to those second and third programs is not this week or this month; it's several years away. But that is no reason to be complacent about it, because the actions we can take to try to stop that are affected better now than a year or two from now.

Yes?

Q: Dr. Perry, in the past, and under the past administration, they were eager to have the nations of the Far East that had fairly successful economies increase their contributions to their own defense. What is your approach to South Korea in terms of how it is paying for its own defense, the preparation of its forces? And should they be -- and are you urging them to take some steps in terms of bolstering their own military?

SEC. PERRY: Yes, this is a matter of concern to us, and we've made a number of recommendations to the South Korean government. The recommendations don't have to do primarily with the size of their expenditures or the size of the armed forces. They have to do with particular improvements they could make which would make them especially effective against the kind of attack that we would postulate might come from North Korea. And that involves a greater emphasis on anti-artillery. We know, for example, that the North Koreans have a massive concentration of artillery, far more than the United -- far more than the South Korean and United States forces combined, and, therefore, that would give the North Koreans some advantage.

A way of dealing with this is, instead of trying to match them in artillery, is to provide anti-artillery, counter-artillery systems -- and, in particular, artillery-locating radars. And we have recommended, for example, to the South Korean government that they incorporate artillery-locating counter-mortar, counter-artillery systems in their

forces. We have some in -- we have such systems in our forces, and we have recommended that they be included in the South Korean forces as well. We've also recommended a greater emphasis on tactical helicopters, Apache helicopters for example, and precision-guided antitank munitions. These have not so much to do with the increasing in size or even necessarily increasing the cost of the South Korean defense effort, but more particularly honing it to the particular kind of threats which the North Koreans would pose.

Q: Are those suggestions being met positively? Or is that something you intend to look at during your time there when you --

SEC. PERRY: It's part of an ongoing dialogue which we have the South Koreans. It's under the -- General Luck. And I think the South Koreans have been positively inclined to them, but I do believe that the events of the last few months might give some more -- might give them a feeling of some greater urgency about moving forward with them.

Yes?

Q: Dr. Perry, on Russia, there's been a lot of reports lately about the physical and political condition of Boris Yeltsin. What indications towards those ends did you receive while you were there?

SEC. PERRY: None at all. Boris Yeltsin was in Sochi during the time that I was in Moscow on a vacation. So I did not see the president. I did meet with Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, and we talked about a variety of subjects, but the health of Mr. Yeltsin was not one of them.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you made an argument about the importance of containing the North Korean nuclear program before it advances further. The United States and its allies have tried the diplomatic track for a year, offering various incentives. That didn't work. Now we're moving very deliberately and cautiously on a possible sanctions track. And even if we do move on that track, it will begin with warnings and very low-level sanctions and perhaps a ratcheting up of pressure. What -- and these sanctions would be applied to a country that already is fairly isolated. What reason do you have to think that the new track that we're on will be effective in achieving the goal that you said is so important, and what do we do if it doesn't work?

SEC. PERRY: I should say, first of all, that we are still pursuing diplomatic -- we've not given up on that yet. And the resolution which is now being contemplated in the United Nations is trying to take one more pass at the -- getting North Korea back into the inspection routine, back into the non-proliferation treaty.

If that fails -- and that's -- we're probably a month to six weeks away from knowing whether that's going to fail -- then I believe that the next step has to be sanctions, and I don't agree that sanctions cannot be effective against North Korea. I do acknowledge that sanctions, to be effective, have to be multilateral. It is not a policy which the United States can embark -- can approach unilaterally because we cannot effectively implement them unilaterally. So we have to have the agreement of -- not only it would be a United Nations resolution, but we have to have the full support of the -- obviously, South Korea and Japan, but China as well.

Now some forms of sanctions can be implemented with a relatively few natures. There are various financial sanctions that could be imposed which would be, I believe, quite damaging to North Korea and could be imposed only with the agreement and actions of a relatively few countries.

Going over other sanctions such as stopping the flow of military equipment or components either into or out of North Korea, would probably require some sort of a blockade, and that's a much greater undertaking. That's an undertaking now which is very close to war. And still other aspects of sanctions -- other ways of applying sanctions would be trying to -- an economic strangulation of the country. To do that, because this country is so isolated and is self-sufficient in many respects, really would require shutting off the flow of oil into the country, and that can only be done if China agrees to do that because the greatest percentage of the oil that goes into North Korea today comes from China.

So it's a very complicated issue, and the outcome of it is not certain. The principal reason, if not certain, is not because it's ineffective, but because we have a very limited knowledge of what drives the thinking of the leadership in the North Korean government -- what is likely to cause them to respond in a positive way, what's likely to cause them to respond in a negative or in a backlash sort of a way.

STAFF: We have time for one more question.

Q: Dr. Perry?

SEC. PERRY: Yes?

Q: I gathered from your comments about the Apaches and the precision-guided munitions that that was a more long-term transfer. Do you see anything more near term, as a -- some kind of transfer to perhaps deter North Korea?

SEC. PERRY: When I was talking about the Apaches and the precision-guided munitions, I was talking the programs for the South Koreans to, over the medium to long term, strengthen their capability by development or purchase of systems.

The short term -- we're looking at a number of short-term measures, first of all, to bolster U.S. forces. That is the immediate responsibility that we have, and we have a fairly complex plan for doing that over the next several months, and ways of transferring equipment to the South Koreans to help them in areas which are of particular vulnerability.

So these are issues which, as I said, we are discussing. Here in the Pentagon, the most intense and detailed discussion has taken place in Korea under the guidance of General Luck, and we are in constant communication with him on those, and as I indicated, I would expect the timing of bringing decisions on that to a head will be sometime in April, and I do expect to be there in April to pursue that.

Q: (Off mike) -- some of the particular vulnerabilities or the particular equipment that you are thinking of transferring to South Korea?

SEC. PERRY: I don't want to walk down the slippery slope on this one, but I will say one which I think is just immediately obvious. If there were to be any military confrontation with the North Koreans, the most powerful contribution which the United States could make to repel that would be our tactical air, and therefore, what I think you can imagine we would be doing in contingency planning -- contingency planning is to take every step we can take so that our tactical air could be applied in a matter of a day or two or three rather than a week or two or three. And those have to do with prepositioning supplies, they have to do with special training for pilots. There are a whole set of things, none of them very dramatic, none of them very spectacular, but the net effect is that we could get large quantities of tactical air, in particular with groundstrike munitions on them -- anti-armor munitions on them -- to the field and in an operating mode in a matter of a few days. And that would be the main thrust of what our plan would be.

Q: Is this something to do just if we go to sanctions, or is this a prudent precaution that you plan to pursue in any event?

SEC. PERRY: It's a prudent precaution in any event.

Thank you.